

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Cancel claims 2-3 and 8. Amend claims 1, 4-12 and 25 as shown below:

1. (currently amended) A method of reducing expression of a target gene in a plant cell, the method comprising the step of expressing in the plant cell an expression cassette comprising:

a promoter operably linked to a sense or antisense targeting sequence having at least about 80% identity to at least a subsequence of the target gene, wherein the subsequence has a length of at least about 25 nucleotides[;], and

an inverted repeat sequence, prepared from a subsequence of a nopaline synthase (NOS) gene, wherein the inverted repeat sequence comprises:

a sense element comprising the subsequence from the NOS gene a subsequence of a nopaline synthase (NOS) gene in a sense orientation; and

a antisense element comprising a reverse complement of the sense element the subsequence from the NOS gene in an antisense orientation; and,

the inverted repeat sequence is at least about 30 base pairs in length and heterologous to the targeting sequence[;], and

the inverted repeat sequence is in a position 3' to the targeting sequence, thereby reducing expression of the target gene.

2. (canceled)

3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sense element of the inverted repeat sequence is from the 3' untranslated region of the NOS gene.

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the sense element of the inverted repeat sequence is from the terminator region of the NOS gene.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sense element of the inverted repeat sequence is from the 5' untranslated region of the NOS gene.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sense element of the inverted repeat sequence is from the coding region of the NOS gene.

8. (canceled)

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the inverted repeat sequence further comprises a sense region, a linker sequence [[region]] situated between the antisense element and the sense element, and an antisense region.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the inverted repeat sequence is from about 30 to about 200 nucleotides in length.

11. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the expression cassette comprises the targeting sequence [[is]] in a sense sequence orientation.

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the expression cassette comprises the targeting sequence [[is]] in an antisense sequence orientation.

13. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the targeting sequence has substantial identity to a plant pathogen target gene.

14. (previously presented) The method of claim 13, wherein the targeting sequence is a viral sequence, a bacterial sequence, an insect sequence, a fungal sequence, or a nematode sequence.

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the targeting sequence has at least about 85% identity to a plant target gene.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the targeting sequence is from about 100 to about 1000 nucleotides in length.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the targeting sequence is from a coding region of the target gene.

18. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the targeting sequence is from a 5' untranslated region of the target gene.

19. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the targeting sequence is from a 3' untranslated region of the target gene.

20. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the target gene is polygalacturonase.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the promoter is a tissue specific promoter.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the promoter is a plant promoter.

23. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, wherein the promoter is a cauliflower mosaic virus 35S promoter or a figwort mosaic virus 34S promoter.

24. (canceled)

25. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the plant cell is from a plant [[is]] selected from the group consisting of wheat, corn, rice, sorghum, pepper, tomato, squash, banana, strawberry, carrot, bean, cabbage, beet, cotton, grape, pea, pineapple, potato, soybean, yam, and alfalfa.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the expression cassette has a nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the targeting sequence comprises a premature stop codon that inhibits translation of the targeting sequence.

28-53. (canceled)